

The County Record.

VOL. 36.

KINGSTREE, SOUTH CAROLINA, THURSDAY, MAY 12, 1921.

NO. 10

J. H. MILLER FOUND DEAD ON ROADSIDE NEAR CADES EARLY SUNDAY MORNING.

**On Road to Kingstree from Lake City when Run Into by
Car Occupied by Tom Poston and Gladys Coker.
Tragedy Follows Collision and Poston
Admits Shooting, is in Prison.**

The people of Kingstree and vicinity were profoundly shocked early Sunday morning as the news spread over town to the effect that J. H. Miller had been found dead on the roadside one mile south of Cades. The news was conveyed here to Sheriff Gamble by Rural Policeman Brockinton about 4:30 a. m. Mr. Gamble at once called his deputy, J. P. Frierson, and together the three officers repaired to the scene of the tragedy.

Mrs. Miller, was notified of her husband's death by Sheriff Gamble before leaving town. Dr. E. T. Kelley and Undertaker Courtney were also called and hurried off to the scene.

Mr. Miller was engaged as superintendent of the Electric Light plant at Lake City. He made his home in Kingstree where his wife and little adopted daughter have lived for the past six years. On Saturday night it was Mr. Miller's custom to drive from Lake City to Kingstree in his Ford car, spending Saturday night and Sunday here and returning to Lake City on Monday mornings. He was on his way from Lake City here when he was killed, and left lying on the roadside Saturday night, half to three quarters of a mile south of the town of Cades.

No facts in the case were apparently known to Mr. Brockinton, who brought word of the dead body in the road and Sheriff Gamble was unable to give any information as to how Mr. Miller had come to his death or at what time in the night.

Phone lines were busy all over town and by 7:00 o'clock a number of citizens, in automobiles, had left town for the scene where the body was found.

When Sheriff Gamble and his deputies reached the scene they found Coroner H. J. Brown and a few other persons present. The coroner had been informed by Mr. Brockinton.

Mr. Miller's Ford car was standing near the middle of the road about ten feet away from the dead body with radius rod bent and out of condition to run. The front of the car was spattered with blood. The dead body of Mr. Miller was lying on the roadside with a bullet hole in his head. About twenty feet from the body there was standing in the road a Ford roadster, headed towards the Cross Roads and also out of running condition.

Mr. Brockinton said he thought the Ford roadster belonged to a Mr. Cox, mail carrier at Cades. There was evidences of a collision by the two cars and the natural presumption on the sheriff's part that the owner of the roadster could give some light on the tragedy that had been enacted in the dark, lonely spot on the roadside sometime during the previous night. Sheriff Gamble went to Mr. Cox's house, awakened him and placed him under arrest. Mr. Cox informed the sheriff that he had loaned the car to Tom Poston the evening before and that Poston had used it. They then went to Poston's home, accompanied by Cox. The party was met by Tom Poston, who, upon being questioned concerning the dead man, told the sheriff that he had shot him, that he was then about to eat his breakfast and start for Kingstree to report the matter. When asked why he had killed Mr. Miller he told the sheriff that he had nothing to say. Poston was then placed under arrest and taken to the scene of the tragedy where he remained under the eye of the sheriff until the coroner and his jury had completed an inquest. Poston's attitude and general demeanor was of absolute indifference and no one on the ground seemed as little concerned as he. During the morning he laughed and chatted with acquaintances as he lounged on the rear seat of an automobile with his feet resting on the back of the front seat.

Coroner Brown summoned as jurors: E. C. Epps, foreman, W. I. Hodges, Robt. Carsten, J. K. Williams, R. L. McElveen, E. F. Martin. The evidence was taken down by Mr. V. G. Arnette of Cades. After the jury had viewed the body it was taken in charge by Undertaker Courtney and brought to Kingstree where it was prepared for burial at his establishment and later taken to the home of Mrs. Koger, where Mr. Miller, his wife and their adopted daughter have made their home during their six years residence in Kingstree.

Body Taken to Hartsville.

At 4:30 o'clock Sunday afternoon funeral services were conducted at the home by the Rev. E. A. McDowell of the Baptist church with which Mr. Miller affiliated. The funeral was attended by a large gathering of friends from this place who held the deceased in high esteem, also a large number of Lake City people, including a delegation from the Lake City Masonic lodge which took charge of the body immediately after the funeral and accompanied it to Hartsville where interment was made Monday afternoon. The casket was covered with floral offerings, last tributes of respect to a fellow citizen who had come to an untimely death.

Jas. Henry Miller was born in New York, December 25, 1880. For many years he made his home in Savannah, Ga. He was an expert electrician and a man that made friends wherever he went. For a number of years he has made his home in South Carolina, having lived in Columbia, Hartsville, Lake City and this place. Some years ago in Hartsville he married Miss Ethel Laney. Of his immediate family there survives one brother, George A. Miller of Savannah, Ga. and his little daughter, who is the adopted child of the deceased.

Developments at Inquest

Mr. Miller's death, once under investigation by the sheriff and the coroner's jury, facts soon begun to unfold, although it is the general belief that the absolute truth in some respects as to what transpired on that lonely spot near the cross roads will never be revealed. There were three people present, one of them, Jas. Henry Miller, was shot to death; Tom Poston, another admits that he killed him; the third, a young woman, Miss Gladys Coker, who was in the car with Poston has thrown very little light upon the tragedy.

But it was soon revealed that Poston and A. R. Brockinton had the Coker girls out for a ride. Poston had gone to the Coker home, got Gladys Coker and her sister, Bernice, and took them to a community church where, by previous arrangement they were met by A. R. Brockinton, rural policeman, who took one of the girls, Bernice, in his car. They all left the church. Poston and Gladys Coker were in the Ford runabout that is alleged to have run into the Ford touring car driven by Mr. Miller. Brockinton and Bernice Coker were following Poston and Gladys Coker over the same road, perhaps an hour behind. When Brockinton arrived at the spot where Mr. Miller had met his death, he found the two cars in the road. He could not pass without difficulty and ran into the ditch. Upon making a survey of the situation. He found lying dead at the side of the Ford touring car a man, a stranger, a pistol by his side. He and the young woman walked to Poston's house and called J. C. Calder who went back with him to where the body was lying. He recognized G. E. Cox's car and knew that Poston was driving it, and believed Poston was drunk. He did not call Poston when he went to his house. Later Mr. Brockinton went to notify Coroner Brown.

Coroner Brown did not know the dead man when he first viewed the body and at once set about identification. On the dead man's clothing he found the initials: "J. H. M." which was indefinite, but there was a handbag in Mr. Miller's car, the coroner opened it and found a batch of mail addressed to "J. H. Miller, Kingstree, S. C." This address bore out by the initials on the clothing and was conclusive. Rural Policeman A. R. Brockinton then came to Kingstree to report to the Sheriff.

Testimony of Gladys Coker

"We left home about 7:30 p. m. and went to church, me Tom and my sis-

ter. Preaching was not over when we left the church; we started to Mr. Poston's. We struck and Tom got out to apologize just as soon as he could straighten car. Miller said he was going to kill Tom. Miller was cursing, Tom was on ground, standing about midway in road between cars. Miller had pistol in his hand and was standing to right of his car. Saw Tom when he shot Miller, fired three shots, Miller did not fall until third shot. After Tom shot him we left. Tom woke his sister and told them what happened. Don't know whose fault it was. Tom's sister waked her husband, J. C. Calder. Calder went to Cades with Alvin (Brockinton). Did not notice that Tom was drinking. We left church first; did not see Alvin and Bernice leave. Tom carried both of us to church. Tom did not seem scared when he came back to car. Said he had shot him. Tom wanted to come back and get car; did not hear Miller say anything after he was shot. After Tom could not get car off we went on to Mr. Poston's. After Tom shot him he went and looked at Mr. Miller; saw pistol by light of Mr. Miller's car. Miller said he wouldn't apologize, had pistol in his hand, and was going to kill Tom. Lights were burning on Tom's car when shooting took place. Tom came back to his car and shut off motor. Tom and I left church about 11:30, got to Mr. Poston's about 12:00 o'clock. Tom first said he would not tell his people what he had done, but I told him to tell about it. He told his sister what he had done, his father was asleep and one of the girls went into his room and told him."

Bernice Coker said: "When we came up this morning saw man in road. Mr. Brockinton could not pass and moved car, backed his car and went in ditch. I went to Mr. H. L. Poston's house, saw Gladys when I went in, she told us about what had happened. Mr. Brockinton told Calder about man in road. Calder told him Tom did the shooting. They then went to Cades. Sister said Tom and Mr. Miller both got out of car at one time and came meeting in road and Miller told Tom to go back to his own car. My sister saw Tom shoot man, he was standing at car when Tom shot. Family was all in room when I went in except Tom, he was in his room."

"We left home about 7:00 or 8:00 o'clock to go to preaching at Sandy Bay Baptist church. After church we came this way. Tom was ahead. Tom brought both me and sister to church and Mr. Brockinton brought me from there. Tom talked to Mr. Brockinton at church. We stayed at church about one hour, did not stop between church and this place."

J. C. Calder testified: "Mr. Brockinton came to my room about 1:00 o'clock. Came down here and found man lying on left side with pistol lying near his hand. Body was about twelve feet from car, Rural police said he had moved car. Went to Cades for coroner, came back and stayed about half hour. Miss Bernice Coker went with Mr. Brockinton to Mr. Poston's where I live. Mr. Brockinton did not call Tom. He hailed when he came to house. It was 12 o'clock when Tom came in, Miss Gladys Coker was with him. Tom told me to come down and help get car to house, did not say what was wrong with car. Did not call Mr. Poston when Mr. Brockinton came. Said he had run against one of the cars and got his car in ditch. Did not ask ladies about wreck. Talked with Poston only about wreck. Did not call Tom because Mr. Brockinton did not require it; said Tom was asleep and would not call him. Did not talk to Tom about dead body, did not tell him about it after going back to house. Did not tell my wife, suppose Miss Gladys Coker told her."

Alvin R. Brockinton, rural policeman (relieved from office by Sheriff Gamble at the scene of the tragedy Sunday morning) testified that "between 12:00 and 1:00 o'clock he found body of J. H. Miller lying by his car. Went first to H. Wright's and then to H. L. Poston's house. Knew Poston

BIG FREIGHT RATES DISCOURAGE TRADE

SENATOR SMITH CITES FIGURES
IN LETTER READ ON THE
SENATE FLOOR.

That the high freight rates are retarding business development, in the country is evidenced by the number of kicks being registered by men and organizations in a position to know, Senator Smith, of South Carolina, declared on the floor of the senate recently that he had received a number of communications as to the present "disastrous freight rates." In a plea for a thorough investigation of the railroad problem he quoted from letters to show the sentiment of the producers and shippers in this state.

The great increase in transportation charges is hurting the trucking interests along the South Carolina coast. This is clearly shown in a letter from M. H. Lazarus Company, of Charleston, to Senator Smith. This concern filed a protest in behalf of the farmers in South Carolina who depend on the eastern markets to handle their products. Under the heading, "Smith Blames Freight Rates," the "Traffic World," of Chicago, has the following to say regarding the senator's remarks:

Senator Smith, of South Carolina, member of the senate interstate commerce committee, said in a speech in the Senate, April 21, that he had received many communications "as to the present disastrous freight rates."

"I have a letter here from Sumter, S. C., under date of April 19," said he, "in which a large lumber dealer states that he shipped a carload of pulpwood from Lynchburg, S. C., my old home, to Sumter, S. C., a distance of 19 miles, five cords to the car, and the freight charge for the distance of 19 miles was \$140."

"I also have a letter from another individual shipping pulpwood into Sumter from another angle, a distance of 13 miles, and the charge on the carload of pulpwood was \$90. The charge was \$140 for 19 miles and \$90 for the 13 miles."

"In addition to this I have a letter from the M. H. Lazarus Company, of King and Hasell streets, Charleston, S. C., in the Southeastern tariff division, in reference to the shipment of truck, from the great trucking industry along the coast to the Eastern cities, and he writes me the following:

For the past year and particularly for the first four months of this year, the losses and hardships which have

been incurred by the farmers of this section in marketing their products in the eastern markets have become so acute that the agricultural committee of the Charleston Chamber of Commerce feels constrained to approach our representatives in congress with a view of securing their cooperation in bringing about a reduction in the freight rates on vegetables from the Charleston district to eastern cities.

A comparison of the rates in effect in 1914 with the rates at present in effect from the Charleston district shows the following:

"I shall not quote it all, but just a few of the figures to indicate what disastrous effects these rates are having not only upon the producers but upon consumers of these articles."

"This shows the rates from Charleston to New York and Philadelphia, as follows: Cabbage in standard barrels or barrel crates—in 1914 the rate per carload lot was 46 cents; in 1921 it was 76½ cents. In less than carload lots the rate in 1914 was 48 cents and in 1921 it was 80 cents.

"On potatoes in standard barrels or in sacks the carload lot rate in 1914 was 29½ cents; in 1921 it was 49½ cents. In less than carload lots in 1914 it was 31 cents and in 1921, 52½ cents.

"For vegetables not otherwise specified, per bushel box, basket, or crate, the carload lot rate in 1914 was 30 cents, and in 1921 it was 50 cents. In less than carload lots, in 1914 it was 32 cents, and in 1921 it was 53½ cents.

"Vegetables per standard barrel, or barrel crate, the carload lot rate in 1914 was 57 cents, and in 1921, 95½ cents. The less than carload lot rate in 1914 was 61 cents, and in 1921 it was \$1.02.

"Mr. President, there was a meeting this morning of farmers, representing every district in the United States, calling the attention of the Chief executive to the freight conditions which exist in this country, and he very wisely told them that the whole economic system at the present time was out of joint, and he promised to do all that was in his power to see that something might be done to relieve the situation.

"The reason I am calling attention to this just at this time, is because I consider the first thing essential to bring about a restoration of anything like prosperity is for us to address ourselves to this question of transportation. It is needless for me to state that with the prices of farm products far below the cost of production, with wages being reduced throughout the country, except in certain places, with everything seeking a lower level, these rates have been maintained as high as, or higher than, they were during the period of the war. They say that the railroads are going rapidly into the hands of receivers and into bankruptcy, and one of the prime causes is that the rates are so high as to be prohibitory and people cannot do business. It is analogous to the situation brought about by the tax on oleomargarine, which 'is so high that the article cannot find a market and, of course, the producers suffer."

"I understand there is to be a thorough investigation of the railroad conditions by the interstate commerce committee, and I wanted Senators to be informed specifically of information such as I have given them this afternoon, showing that \$90 was charged for hauling a carload of pulpwood 13 miles, and for 19 miles \$140, and a 100 per cent. raise in the rate of vegetables from the semi-tropical and temperate zone or section of our country to the near-by eastern cities."

"So that one of the prime reasons for the high cost of living is the difference between the low cost of production and the high cost of transportation which is pouring into the railroads. It is true they are carrying less, and perhaps the return is less. But, as far as the shipper is concerned, it means bankruptcy for him or prohibition of his entire business."

Call For Bids.

Notice is hereby given that the County Commissioners will receive bids at their office in Kingstree, S. C., on Saturday the 21st day of May 1921, at 12:00 noon for the building of a porch on two sides of the county Jail. The board reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

S. J. SINGLETARY,
May 12. 2t Chairman.

Nature insists that we adapt ourselves to conditions or change the conditions—take your choice.

REV. E. A. McDOWELL ADDRESSES VETERANS

MEMORIAL DAY IS OBSERVED
HERE. EXERCISES AT THE
COURT HOUSE TUESDAY.

It has been the custom for a number of years for the Kingstree Chapter United Daughters of the Confederacy to give a five dollar gold piece to the High school pupil who writes the best essay on the subject chosen by the Chapter. This year the Chapter chose as the subject: "Jefferson Davis." This essay was read at the memorial exercises in the Court House Tuesday morning, by Rev. Davis, and the prize was awarded to the writer, Miss Dollie McFadden for the best essay. Miss Annie Laura Singleton coming second. The judges for the essays were Mrs. L. W. Gilland, Miss Rubie Thorn, Rev. John Davis. After the exercises at the Court house the veterans marched over to the Kellahan hotel where the Kingstree Chapter of the U. D. C. served them with a delightful dinner.

Address to the Veterans.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, Pupils of the Graded School and Confederate Veterans:

There was never a more just cause than that for which the Confederate soldier fought, and never an army more worthy of honor than the one that, 60 years ago, followed Lee and Jackson.

As the righteousness of the Southern cause has sometimes been called into question, I feel it in my heart to make my first word to you, one in its vindication.

It should be quite enough for you, and all the world to know, that you fought for principles, not only as dear as those for which your fathers in the Revolution fought, but that you fought for those identical principles for which they fought!

It is a well-known fact that the colonies of 1775 and 76 were perfectly willing to sustain to the mother country, the relationship of provinces, provided they should be conceded the right and privilege of internal and domestic government. I declare to you that this, and this alone, was the issue between the colonies and Great Britain. And when this right was refused, our fathers said: "We shall fight for it." The eight long years of struggle, of sacrifice and bloodshed on the part of our Revolutionary fathers, was for this dear principle. When the long struggle was over, in which they were the conquerors, and a compact was entered into by the colonies, that were then merged into Sovereign states for mutual protection against a common enemy and the regulation of international commercial relations, there was nothing more jealously guarded than the sovereign rights of each state to govern its internal and domestic civil affairs. Even while Washington was still leading the military forces of the colonies in that glorious struggle for liberty, and Patrick Henry was in his prime as a statesman, Thos. Nelson, in a Virginia convention, offered a resolution providing "that the power of forming government, and the regulation of the internal concerns of each colony," be left to the respective colonial legislatures." In words of burning eloquence this resolution was seconded by Patrick Henry, and was unanimously adopted.

The 9th article of the constitution of the United States today, provides that "Each state shall respectively retain every power, jurisdiction and right which has not been delegated in the Constitution."

As to the justness of your cause, honored veterans, it is enough for you to know, that the pivot upon which the great struggle of the sixties turned, was this sacred right and privilege, baptized in the blood of your fathers.

You have been called rebels. I denounce the accusation as utterly false and slanderous. What in the name of justice and mason, did you rebel against? Certainly not the Constitution!

When you quit your homes, and laid your lives on the altar of your country, it was in defense of the Constitution.

You have been charged with firing upon the United States Flag as it waved over Fort Sumter. If you did, it was after you had exhausted every means to regain by peaceful possession the fort, which, after secession, was your own, rightful property. You fired upon Fort Sumter resist-

Continued on page Four.